



MASSACHUSETTS HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

INSTRUCTORS' CHALLENGE

Volume XVI, Issue V

November 2017

New Instructor Workshop Scheduled / Time To Think about scheduling 2018 Courses

Massachusetts Division
of Fisheries & Wildlife
Hunter Education
Program Newsletter

Inside this Issue:

Training and Spring Courses	1
2018 Licenses on Sale	2
Welcome New Staff	2
Wild Turkey Facts	2
Masswildlife and NWTf Partner for Habitat	3
George Peterson Honored	3
Calendar Of Events	4

The MassWildlife Hunter Education Program has scheduled the next New Instructor Workshop for January 20th, 2018 at the Field Headquarters in Westborough, MA.

If you know of any prospective candidates who are interested in becoming a Volunteer Instructor with the program, please have them contact us as soon as possible. We may be able to help them get the application process completed in time to participate in this workshop and start teaching with teams early in 2018.

Speaking of next year, it is time for teams to begin scheduling courses for winter and spring. We have already received course requests from several teams who have



*Instructor Candidates prepare to deliver a lesson during a previous New Instructor Workshop. The next introductory workshop for new volunteers will be held at the MassWildlife FHQ on **January 20th, 2018.***

scheduled courses in the first quarter of the year. If your team has been considering a late January or February course, you still have time to submit requests.

2018 Licenses And Guide Available Dec. 1st



Starting December 1st, you can purchase your 2018 licenses through [MassFishHunt](#), at a [license vendor location](#), or at a [MassWildlife office](#). During December, it is possible to purchase either a 2017 or a 2018 license; so, take care when making your purchase. As a reminder, minors 15-17 years of age may not purchase hunting or sporting licenses online. A minor's license is only available at vendor locations and certain documentation must be provided when making a license purchase. Details are given in the Massachusetts Guide to Hunting, Freshwater Fishing and Trapping Laws. An advanced copy is provided with this mailing.

MASSWILDLIFE

1 Rabbit Hill Road | Westborough, MA 01581 | mass.gov/masswildlife

MHEP Welcomes New Staff Member

Cynthia Pratt joined the Hunter Education team mid-July as clerical support after a career as a jack-of-all-trades for small, privately owned businesses. She grew up in Rhode Island and Maine and remained in Massachusetts after graduating from Worcester State with a degree in Natural Science. Outside of work, Cynthia can be found out in the woods, hiking or taking photographs. Her favorite season is winter and she will be very disappointed this year if the local ponds, again, do not remain frozen for good, consistent skating.



Wild Facts About That Thanksgiving Bird

Maybe you're already dreaming about Thanksgiving: turkey, stuffing, all the pies. And maybe you thought you knew everything about turkeys. Think again.

Wild turkeys are not hard to find – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants to remind everyone that National wildlife refuges are great places to view wild turkeys or find the perfect hunt. Refuge trails generally are open sunrise to sunset, many even on Thanksgiving Day when refuge visitor centers will be closed. Free trail maps are often available outside a visitor center or at a refuge entrance kiosk and you can find your trail online.

Here are some more facts that could add to the lively talk around your holiday table.

- Thought the only turkey sound is gobble, gobble? In fact, turkeys make all kinds of sounds: fly-down or fly-up cackle; kee kee run; excited yelp and more. Hear them all, thanks to the National Wild Turkey Federation.
- Turkey droppings tell a bird's sex and age. Male droppings are j-shaped; female droppings are spiral-shaped. The larger the diameter, the older the bird.
- Turkeys may look off-kilter – tilting their heads and staring at the sky – yet they're fast. In a poultry race, they can clock more than 12 miles per hour.



- Tom turkeys aren't the only ones that swagger and fan their tail feathers to woo mates and ward off rivals. Some hens strut, too.

When you are ready to head outdoors, use the online **National Wildlife Refuge System hunting guide** to find the ultimate hunt location. Be sure to check federal and state regulations for licenses, seasons and special permitting. You can also brush up on your photography skills or just enjoy a variety of scenic trails.

Here are two favorite turkey hideouts in the Northeast:

MASSACHUSETTS: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

You are most likely to see wild turkeys along the 6.5-mile-long Wildlife Drive. Make sure to look in the fields that surround that area. Early mornings and evenings are the best times to catch a glimpse. Entrance fee: \$5 per vehicle.

NEW YORK: Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge—Take the scenic Feeder

Road in your quest to see wild turkeys. A parking lot makes it easy to leave your car to see the refuge on foot. Walk the road or sample three hiking trails. No entrance fee. The refuge is open to turkey hunting in the spring. The refuge also offers a turkey hunt geared toward youthful hunters April 21-22, 2018, in accordance with New York State's youth hunt days.

MassWildlife And NWTF Partner To Improve Wildlife Habitat

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) recently partnered with the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) on a wildlife habitat improvement project on Moose Brook Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Barre, MA. The Massachusetts Chapter of the NWTF financed the habitat management work and MassWildlife provided the technical planning and oversight. The project involved clearing trees and shrubs and removing invasive plants on an overgrown 3-acre parcel at Moose Brook. The open habitat created by this clearing expands the footprint of existing open habitat on the property and benefits a variety of wildlife, including the Wild Turkey for which the NWTF is named. Visitors to Moose Brook WMA will also benefit from a new parking area off of Sheldon Road, providing enhanced access to that portion of the WMA. Many types of wildlife rely on open habitats like grassland, shrubland, and young forest—all of which are declining in Massachusetts. The goal of **MassWildlife's Habitat Program** is to create, restore, and maintain open habitats on public wildlife lands across the Commonwealth. Fortunately, these goals complement NWTF's "Save the Habitat, Save the Hunt" initiative, which seeks to conserve and enhance critical wildlife habitat.

"We really appreciate this kind of support from conserva-

tion partners like the National Wild Turkey Federation. Their contribution makes a difference for wildlife," said **Jack Buckley, MassWildlife Director**. "Restoring open habitat is a shared priority between MassWildlife and NWTF, as it benefits game birds like Wild Turkeys and Ruffed Grouse, as well as less common birds such as the Field Sparrow and Eastern Towhee."

Wild turkeys use open habitats and young forests for nesting, breeding, and courtship activities. These habitats foster an abundance of insects, an important food source for brooding hens and young turkeys, enabling them to grow quickly to maturity.

"Massachusetts NWTF was proud to assist MassWildlife with the recent habitat improvement project at Moose Brook WMA. We recognize the vital importance that projects like this play in providing habitat for a variety of game and non-game species," said **Keith Fritze, NWTF Massachusetts Chapter President**.

Like all Wildlife Management Areas, Moose Brook WMA is open to the public for wildlife-related recreation, including hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing. This 922-acre property is a popular destination for hunting opportunities for game species like white-tailed deer, black bear, and turkey.

Former DFG Commissioner George Peterson Receives Sargent Award

On October 4, 2017, George Peterson Jr, former House Representative and Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game, received the Francis W. Sargent Conservation Award from the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board for his contributions to the sporting community and to the conservation of the Commonwealth's natural resources.

Peterson, a hunter and angler for most of his life, studied at the UMass Amherst Stockbridge School of Agriculture for a short time but went into the US Army in 1969 where he served for two years. He worked with friends who were commercial fishermen in Gloucester and Rockport before becoming an owner of a small retail/wholesale seafood business in North Grafton. He first became involved in politics serving on the Grafton Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. Elected as a state representative in the 9th Worcester District in 1994, Peterson

sat on the Natural Resources and Agriculture and Rules Committees and served as the House Minority Whip and later as the assistant minority leader. His interest in the outdoors continued throughout his tenure in the Legislature, supporting legislation and other efforts to protect natural resources and promote outdoor recreation. Peterson was a strong advocate for the Blackstone River, participating in the 2000 Blackstone Expedition, a four-day paddle from Worcester to Providence. He retired from the legislature in 2014.

In February of 2015, Peterson was appointed Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game by Governor Charlie Baker. For over two years, he worked on the issues he cared deeply care about — habitat conservation, fisheries management, ecological restoration, and enhancement of public access to the Bay State's lands and waters, and outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing.

Youth Deer Hunt Results

The 2017 Youth Deer Hunt Day was held on September 30. This unique opportunity allows young hunters to hunt deer with their own permit during a special one-day season that precedes the Commonwealth's regular annual deer hunting seasons. MassWildlife issued 1,225 youth permits and so far, approximately 100 harvested deer have been reported through the online Mass-FishHunt system. Deer reported at physical check stations will be tallied after the conclusion of the regular deer hunting seasons.

Calendar Of Events

November 30: Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network Conference, Westborough –

Natural resource managers involved with or planning to engage in climate adaptation are invited to join the Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network for a one-day conference launching this new network and shape adaptation action in Massachusetts. The conference will be held at MassWildlife's Field Headquarters on 1 Rabbit Hill Road in Westborough from 9-4. Meet new colleagues and mingle with existing partners, learn about adaptation work in Massachusetts, develop outreach messages during the climate adaptation communications training, contribute to the state climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plan, and showcase your adaptation projects. For more information and to register, go online to <https://www.massecan.org/new-events>

December 14: Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Meeting, Westborough –

The meeting will take place at the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters Office located at 1 Rabbit Hill Road in Westborough from 1:30–4:30 p.m. in the Southwest Meeting Room, Room #103. Please note: If you have a disability or medical condition and wish request special accommodations contact Susan Sacco at 508-389-6342.

You may be Surprised to know...

6 HEALTH BENEFITS OF Eating VENISON

Drug-Free
No steroids, antibiotics or other additives.

Low in Calories
Around 104 cal per serving of 3.5 ounces. Less than lamb, beef, turkey and chicken.

Lean Fats
Contains essential fats that help reduce blood pressure and improve muscle movement.

High in Protein
Contains all of the essential amino acids, making it a complete protein.

Filled with Iron
Helps to fight anemia and fatigue by supplying more iron than most other meat sources.

Vitamin Rich
Contains vitamin B12 and B3 which help regulate metabolism.

Sources
 • Wild Gourmet- Boone and Crockett Club, 2014
 • Texas Fish & Game, 2012
 • Baltic Animal Breeding Conference, 2010
 • Nutrition & Food science, 1993

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National SHOOTING SPORTS Foundation
PROMOTE • PROTECT • PRESERVE

Instagram Just Got Wild

MassWildlife is happy to announce it is now on **Instagram**! Follow us **@mass.wildlife** for photos and videos from the field and fish and wildlife news.